



March 30, 2009

Ed Cole, Forest Supervisor
Sierra National Forest
1600 Tollhouse Road
Clovis, CA 93611

RE: GCA – 08

Dear Supervisor Cole:

Please accept this letter from the BlueRibbon Coalition, a national trail group, as indication of **support** for your 2008/09 General Ground Operations Grant and Education/Safety Grant. BRC also offers support for the Bass Lake RD Planning Grant.

BRC has reviewed the proposals and believes the size and scope of the grant package reflects the current holistic nature of the agency's commitment to managed OHV recreation.

BRC understands the OHV community has serious concerns regarding the proposed number of miles (or lack thereof) in the current travel management process. Support for these grants should be taken as an endorsement of the current TMR planning process.

BRC believes in the importance of maintaining existing OHV/OSV facilities including trails, campgrounds, staging areas, kiosks, and toilets. BRC supports the use of the "Trail Shot" crew for work on extreme black diamond OHV routes such as the world famous Dusy-Ershim OHV Trail (Yes, I rode that trail both ways in one day on a dirt-bike). BRC believes maintaining those high value routes helps in preserving those opportunities for long-term use by the OHV community.

BRC supports the Bass Lake Ranger District's planning grant because -- regardless of the initial amount of miles of routes designated in the TMR -- we believe it is critically important for the Forest to have adequate funding to implement the Decision (or Action Plan) as it relates to managed OHV recreation. BRC believes funding this grant will allow for the future consideration and site-specific planning necessary to bring additional routes onto the system or for improving OHV related staging areas or campgrounds.

As Congress designates more Wilderness Areas in California, support from users and the OHMVR grants program to maintain existing OHV opportunities becomes increasingly important. Funding of existing OHV facilities is consistent with the tone and direction of SB742.

BRC supports the education/safety grant. BRC commends the Forest for using a holistic approach to education through a blend of public outreach, signing, meeting with users, and holding workshops for "hands-on" training of volunteers. If you print a trail map BRC suggests addressing the "user unfriendly" tenets of the standard MVUM. This could be accomplished by printing a higher quality and more user friendly route map on the backside of the MVUM. BRC would urge this Forest to consider publishing some type of "hybrid MVUM" where at least one side of the map has value to the trail user. Having a map that users can read is one key to successful implementation of the travel plan.

BRC thanks your office for allowing us to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Don', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Don Amador
Western Representative
BlueRibbon Coalition, Inc.
555 Honey Lane
Oakley, CA 94561
Office: 925.625.6287
Email: brdon@sharetrails.org